



OBSERVATION POST



May 4, 2012

Since 1957

Vol. 56 Issue 15

www.marines.mil/unit/29palms

Combat Center wins third Installation Excellence Award

PRESS RELEASE

The Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center has been recognized for a third consecutive year by the Office of the President of the United States with the Commander in Chief's Installation Excellence Award.

The award, presented Wed. May 2, in Washington, D.C., recognizes the efforts of the people who operate and maintain U.S. military installations and is awarded

to the top installation chosen among the four military services.

Known throughout the world as the "The Combat Center," the Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center is home to the Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command and serves as the Marine Corps' premier combined arms, live-fire and maneuver training installation. During 2011, MAGTFTC provided training support to more than 44,000 Marines, sailors and joint and coalition allies.

In addition to the command's efforts

towards its training mission, several major projects were completed in order to improve the quality of life for the Combat Center's Marines, sailors and their families and to facilitate the command's training activities. Highlights include the construction and renovation of five barracks buildings, construction of a new family housing neighborhood, the repair and renovation of recreational and family centers and the ribbon cutting on the Corps' largest urban warfare training range, the 284-acre CAMOUT facility

The Combat Center's resource conservation and environmental stewardship efforts also earned the command top honors in 2011. The Combat Center was recognized with both the 2011 Secretary of the Navy Energy and Water Management Award and the Federal Energy Management Program Award. It earned two Secretary of the Navy Environmental Awards for Sustainability and the Marine Corps Superior Achievement in Safety Award. The Combat Center's

See **AWARD** page A5

Marine earns Bronze Star

Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

In June 2011, the police advisory team for 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, was observing known enemy firing positions in Afghanistan. They pulled out and began patrolling back toward a point between a berm and a building where the enemy usually shot from. That's where the ambush started, and where Sgt. Anthony Wheeler and his team got pinned down.

After the gunfight started, Wheeler looked back and saw someone on the ground. He didn't know exactly who it was at first. He took cover and pushed back toward his radio operator. It was then that he found out the unknown casualty was their Afghan interpreter.

The team initially tried to call him to them, but he wasn't able to move. Wheeler told his team to increase their rate of fire to cover him as he went out and grabbed the young man. As he ran across open ground, the enemy also increased their fire. He reached their interpreter and dragged him back to the ditch. He began first aid until the hospital corpsman arrived to take over.

Wheeler ran 12 meters through enemy fire down a dirt road to reach the Afghan national. The interpreter had been shot once in the left shoulder and once in the neck. Wheeler saved the life of the 21-year-old man. He pulled him to safety and provided

See **MEDAL** page A5



Sgt. Anthony Wheeler, advisory team leader, Advisor Training Group, Headquarters Battalion, stands with his wife and two children after being awarded the Bronze Star with a combat "V" for his actions in Afghanistan at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field May 1.



SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

[Above] Lance Cpl. Matthew Sartin, radio technician, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, gives his daughter, Jayde, 11 months, one last kiss as his wife, Carson, lifts her up to him before the battalion leaves for a deployment to Afghanistan April 26.

[Right] Caden Buss, 3, son of Seaman Jonathan Buss, hospital corpsman, 3rd LAR, steals one last hug before his dad deploys to Afghanistan April 26. "Tell your mom we want to get pancakes when I get back," Buss said to Caden moments before the bus pulled out. Pancakes is his and his dad's special treat, Caden explained after the buses pulled out.



DIANE DURDEN

Oscar Mike WOLFPACK

■ 3rd LAR heads to Afghanistan

Story by Sgt. Heather Golden

The Marines and sailors of 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion shared parting hugs and kisses with families April 26 as they left for a seven-month tour to Afghanistan.

The group hopes to leave Afghanistan later this year with a stronger local force than what it had when they arrive.

"The primary goal of the battalion is to train, partner and mentor the Afghan security forces in order to turn over and facilitate the eventual retrograde of coalition forces," said Capt. Christopher Buck, officer in charge, Remain Behind Element, 3rd

LAR, and the company commander for the battalion's Echo Company.

The Marines have spent about the last 10 months in a training work-up to prepare for their time with the Afghan

Enhanced Mojave Viper cycle.

For the families left behind at home, the family readiness officer has several events planned to help the group stay in contact with the support network they have been building during unit events since December, said Jillian King, FRO, 3rd LAR. They can look forward to an upcoming pot luck and a little black dress event toward the end of the summer.

For those who want the most up-to-date information coming in from the front lines, so to speak, King stressed that

See **DEPLOYMENT** page A5

"The primary goal of the battalion is to train, partner and mentor the Afghan security forces in order to turn over and facilitate the eventual retrograde of coalition forces,"

— Capt. Christopher Buck

troops, starting with the Basic Individual Infantry Skills package last July and culminating with their

EvacOps

Story by
Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi
Combat Correspondent

Marines conduct Non-combatant Evacuation Operation at the Combat Center

Combat Logistic Battalion 26 conducted two rounds of a non-combatant evacuation operation at Range 220 April 26.

CLB-26 Marines simulated evacuation of American citizens and foreign nationals in preparation of the wide range of missions they might be asked to perform as part of a Marine Expeditionary Unit: the Marine Corps' expeditionary crisis reaction force.

The exercise utilized 74 Marine role players, two CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters and the use of the range known as

Combined Arms Military Operations in Urban Terrain, which is the Corps' largest facility of its kind used for urban environments. Areas of the range were outfitted to represent Yemen.

The simulation was simple. Evacuate all men and women from Yemen to the safe haven country, Kenya. The air wing at Camp Wilson served as Kenya for the exercise.

"The key things that we focus on are the security and accountability of the evacuees and making sure nothing

See **NEO** page A5

Remember the fallen

Lt. Col. Seth Folsom, battalion commander, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and his wife, Ashley, pause to pay their respects to Staff Sgt. Joseph D'Augustine, who died conducting combat operations in Afghanistan. Folsom knelt at each of the seven battlefield crosses for the fallen Marines from his battalion during a Remembrance Ceremony held here at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field May 2. For more photos and the full story, see next week's edition of the Observation Post.



DIANE DURDEN

This Week in Combat Center History



Reprinted from the Observation Post dated April 30, 1963, Vol. 7, No. 18
Golf course opens May 8 – clinic today

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Your new golf course will officially open Wednesday, May 8 at 11:45 a.m. when the Commander of the Amphibious Forces, Pacific, Vice Admiral E. P. Holmes and the Base Commander, Brig. Gen. J. L. Stewart and their guests cut the tape and tee off on the first hole.

Festivities will begin with a gala open house where you will be able to make a first-hand inspection of the facilities of the club house and surrounding area. The Base Band will be on hand, and the snack bar will be open. Also, limited starting times are available on opening day. For your tee-off time call M. Sgt. Hartly at Ext. 210 after 7:30 a.m., May 6.

Don't forget, the golf course WILL open May 8. Why not come out and see just what progress has been made, and just what will be available to you and your family.

ic will be a basic lesson in golf, including golf etiquette. Alton E. Greer, the golf pro at the new course will be the instructor, and all eligible personnel are invited to attend. There will be no charge for this group lesson.

Al Greer is a retired Marine and a member of the Professional Golfers Association of America. He has been playing golf since the age of 13, and turned pro in 1949. As a professional Marine golfer, he won the Bruke Inaugural Open in 1959 and the Mid-Pacific Open. He has played on four All-Marine Golf Teams, and is the current All-Marine Champion.

Al is the man in charge of the course, and at the same time, he will be giving golf lessons both individually and group instruction. He is also trying to set up a package of six lessons for the price of five. Golf lessons are \$1.50 per lesson.

The new course will be officially opened next Wednesday, May 8 with official ceremonies at 11:45 a.m. An open house of the course and its facilities will be at 10 a.m.

Speeding can kill

■ Choosing the right, safest motorcycle to own

FRANK SANTIAGO

BASE SAFETY

As with anything in life, we can expect change. And the same is true for motorcycles.

I can recall many years ago (and I won't say how many) owning an 85 Honda CB 700 SC. I remember riding this bike with a violent head wind and cranking my throttle open until it wouldn't turn anymore and still not being able to accelerate past 65 mph. And it was a struggle to simply achieve that. Don't get me wrong. She was a great bike and very reliable. She just didn't have the guts to cut through an overly strong head wind.

Today I own an 07 Honda CBR 600RR. I have ridden my CBR in just about every wind storm Twentynine Palms can throw at me. I've ridden it in head winds that

would blow a semi truck over. Interestingly, I never experienced a power loss going into the wind like I did on my old 700.

Weekly, I conduct a Basic Rider Course here on the installation, and prior to the class starting I always ask my students what type of bike they would like to own. And I always get that one guy who says "I want to buy an R1." This always makes me smile because I am completely aware of the capabilities of today's liter bikes.

Motorcycles have evolved and changed from the heavy and slow dinosaurs they used to be to the aerodynamic and light weight power houses we have today.

Current motorcycles, sport bikes specifically, were designed on the track with the intent to win races. They were designed to get to an extremely high rate of

speed in a very short amount of time and to get from that speed to a slower rate of speed in a similar amount of time. I am of course 100 percent supportive of this. But on the street, that kind of power is not necessary. I promise to you that kind of power can never be used to its full ability on the street legally.

So why would a rider what a bike like that if they can never use it to its full potential? That should be an obvious answer - machismo.

Before making a huge mistake on an incorrect motorcycle purchase, always consider that motorcycles should never be underestimated and all bikes have the potential to do great harm to the rider if mistreated. Above everything else no matter what bike you end up with, always respect your ride.

San Bernardino County Fire Department Hazardous Materials Division notice of availability for review of risk management plan

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 25535.2 of chapter 6.95 of the California Health and Safety Code, that the Hazardous Material Division of the San Bernardino County Fire Department has determined that the Risk Management Plan for the storage of aqueous ammonia 19% at Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, located in Twentynine Palms, is complete and will be available for review and comment by inter-

ested persons and public groups from May 14 until June 27.

For an appointment to review the RMP, please contact the Hazardous Materials Division at (909) 386-8401, 620 S. E Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0153 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m.

All comments shall be submitted in writing to: RMP Coordinator, Hazardous Materials Division, 620 S. E Street, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0153 no later than 5 p.m. on June 27.

The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel. Find it at <http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>.

The Combat Center has its own Flickr photo and video streams. Find them at <http://www.flickr.com/thecombatcenter>.

OBSERVATION POST

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OFF-LIMITS ESTABLISHMENTS

MCIWest off-limits establishments guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations. This order applies to all military personnel.

Local off-limits guidance prohibits service members from patronizing the following locations.

In Oceanside:

- Angelo's Kars, 222 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054
- Angelo's Kars, 226 S. Coast Hwy, Oceanside, Calif., 92054

In San Diego:

- Club Mustang, 2200 University Ave.
- Club San Diego, 3955 Fourth St.
- Get It On Shoppe, 3219 Mission Blvd.
- Main Street Motel, 3494 Main St.
- Vulcan Baths, 805 W. Cedar St.

In National City:

- Dream Crystal, 15366 Highland Ave.
- Sports Auto Sales, 1112 National City Blvd.

In Twentynine Palms:

- Adobe Smoke Shop, 6441 Adobe Rd.
- STC Smoke Shop, 6001 Adobe Rd.
- K Smoke Shopp, 5865A Adobe Rd.

In Yucca Valley:

- Yucca Tobacco Mart, 57602 29 Palms Hwy.
- Puff's Tobacco Mart, 57063 29 Palms Hwy.

In Palm Springs:

- Village Pub, 266 S. Palm Canyon Dr.

For the complete orders, but not off-limits, check out the Combat Center's official website at <http://www.marines.mil/units/29palms>

HOT TOPIC

HIRING OUR HEROES

A job fair for active military members, Guard and Reserve members and military spouses will be held at The Venetian, 3355 Las Vegas Boulevard South, Las Vegas. The Hiring Our Heroes job fair will be held May 17 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. It is a free hiring fair for employers and job seekers. Register at hoh.greatjobs.net. For assistance registering, contact hiringourheroes@usc.hamber.com.

SUDOKU #2527-M

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			8	4				
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6		3				5		8
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			4		6	5		

PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2011 HOMETOWN CONTENT

BIRD WATCHING

See answers on page A6

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
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62					63				64				65
66					67				68				
69					70				71				

ACROSS

- Instruments struck with mallets
- "Guarding ___" (MacLaine movie)
- Pork serving
- The Who's "Tommy," for one
- The BeehiveState
- Follow a trail
- Purge, Pied Piper? style
- ___ fide
- Spheroid hairdo
- 1976 Sean Connery film
- Gorcey or Durocher
- Jiffy
- Cartoon skunk Le Pew
- Diarist Anai's
- Garlicky seafood dish
- Wolfed down
- High points
- Organizer's organization
- 1968 Richard Burton film
- Part of the gibles
- Russell who played Braddock
- Artist Gerard ___ Borch
- Pleasant to look at
- ___?Wan Kenobi
- It's right in an atlas
- "___ you nuts?"
- Figs.
- 1984 Matt Dillon film
- Go hither and yon
- Mischievous spirit
- Periodicals, for short
- "___ from Muskogee"
- Some sibs
- One of the Bronte's
- Cry out loud
- Bronte's Jane
- Lavisher of attention

DOWN

- Word on a penny
- Abbr. on a phone
- Rex's detective
- '40s pinup Betty
- "Socrate" composer Erik
- Oompah sounder
- Thames town
- Makes smoother
- Brings dishonor to
- Burn the surface of
- LP player
- Cajun veggie
- Hacienda hand
- Present time
- Point a finger at
- Ratchet mates
- Code of conduct
- Royal pain
- Apple model
- United ___ College Fund
- Trinidad/Tobago divider
- Sporty Mazda
- Pumice openings
- Chemically nonreactive
- Obsolescent roof topper
- Messy eater, e.g. Toon Chihuahua
- "Dallas" family name
- Swimmer Buster
- Word preceding dog or Pie
- Atlanta university
- Moved like the Blob
- Where Paris took Helen
- ___ up (falsify)
- Villain's work
- Have a hunch
- Stereotypical lab assistant
- Big letters on Wall St.
- Monogram part: Abbr.
- Strike out
- Neighbor of Turk.

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or
HIDesertStar.com/observation_post/

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WHAT I'VE LEARNED

THE BIKER

Bob Piirainen

Motorcycle Program Manager, Base Safety Office
Palmdale, Calif., 49

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY
SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

April 25, 2012

> **I guess I was a bit** of a daredevil with bicycles. I crashed a number of those, and came home with many scabs and scars. I moved up to motorcycles at about 8.

> **I pushed the envelope.** You push curfew. Talk back to Mom. Get put on restriction until you're 105. Climb trees. Fall out of trees. Typical.

> **My dad actually bought** my motorcycle, my first one. My mom never knew I had

it. She caught me a couple times on friends' motorcycles and told me if she ever found out I had one, she'd cut the tires. So I had this motorcycle for probably four years and kept it at my buddy's house.

> **Started out riding two wheels** in the dirt, fell in love with it. I got my motorcycle license the day I turned 16, the same day I got my driver's license. Short of a few years, I've had a street bike ever since.

> **I've never crashed on the street.** In the dirt, I've crashed many times, like everybody does. But never in the street with cars and trucks. It'll be 34 years, come December, I've been riding on the street.

> **I was about 19.** I had gotten a lot of close calls. I had what I thought was an old guy tell me that I rode like an idiot and I needed to change my ways or I was going to die on the bike. I told him, "You're old. You don't know what you're talking about." But probably the best advice he ever gave me was to ride like everybody out there is trying to get you.

> **About two weeks after that,** I had another really close call. I really started thinking about it. And I've been riding ever since. Literally, everybody, anybody and everybody around me, I assume they're going to try and run me over, and so I plan for it.

> **It probably happens** to me twice a day, that I have to avoid somebody.

> **I met Lynn online.** She's a feisty little thing. She's got a lot of spirit, sometimes more than I like. She loves motorcycles, although she'd never been on one prior to me. She was fascinated by them. We've been going on strong ever since. She's good people. Most of the time.

> **It's really nice when someone** comes up to me a year later and says, "Hey Bob, I remember you told us this in class and it probably got me out of a wreck." So yes, my job is very fulfilling.

> **There's a big difference between** driving even 100 miles in a car compared to a motorcycle. You see more, you smell more, you hear more. There's so much out there to see you miss behind the wheel. I think most of the time, it's either in you or it isn't.

> **I think most motorcycle riders** tend to be more of risk-takers than a normal person, because it is a little more dangerous.

> **I wanted to be a baseball player.** I'd played baseball since I was six years old. Because of something that happened my sophomore year of high school, I didn't play nearly as much as I used to. That injury cost me a chance to get a scholarship to play baseball. At that point, I didn't really know what I was going to do.

> **I joined the military.** The Air Force. Everybody thinks I'm a retired gunny. I guess I look the part, or sound like it.

> **Looking back, I probably should** have joined the Marine Corps. It probably would have been a 20-year career for me. Me and the Air Force, we did not get along.

> **I have nothing against the Air Force.** I love what they do. But for my personality, it was a little too much "touchy-feely" and not enough politically incorrect, what the hell is wrong with you, suck it up, get this done and let's go. We had coffee breaks. It's just not the same. It was just not for me at all.

> **I was a weapons guy.** I uploaded and downloaded the weapons on an F-111, which maybe the old people reading this will know what that is. It's an old plane.

> **I've got** an interesting resume I guess.

> **Prior to coming here,** you wouldn't get me in front of a podium with five people I knew. Nowadays I've been told you can't shut me up. I will talk to a thousand Marines for an hour without a Powerpoint.

> **In the real world,** if we can get to 10 percent of people and get them to change their habits, then that's good.

> **I have two daughters. My youngest is now 18.** My oldest just turned 31. The 31-year-old was with a high school sweetheart. The 18-year-old, I was married and settled down. We won't mention how many wives I've had.

> **The younger one keeps** telling me she wants to ride. I don't like it. I know how dangerous it can be. My 18-year-old has the attention span of my chair over there.

> **I taught my wife** to ride. Teaching a loved one to ride is difficult. I was a little harder on her. To be honest, I didn't want her to pass. It's much easier to me to protect her when she's behind me than when I'm behind her on a motorcycle and something bad happens.

> **I will not teach** my daughter if she chooses to ride. But, the person would absolutely have to have my trust.

> **I am very particular in what I do.** I'm not bragging, but I consider myself one of the best coaches out there period. And I expect nothing but the best out of my guys.

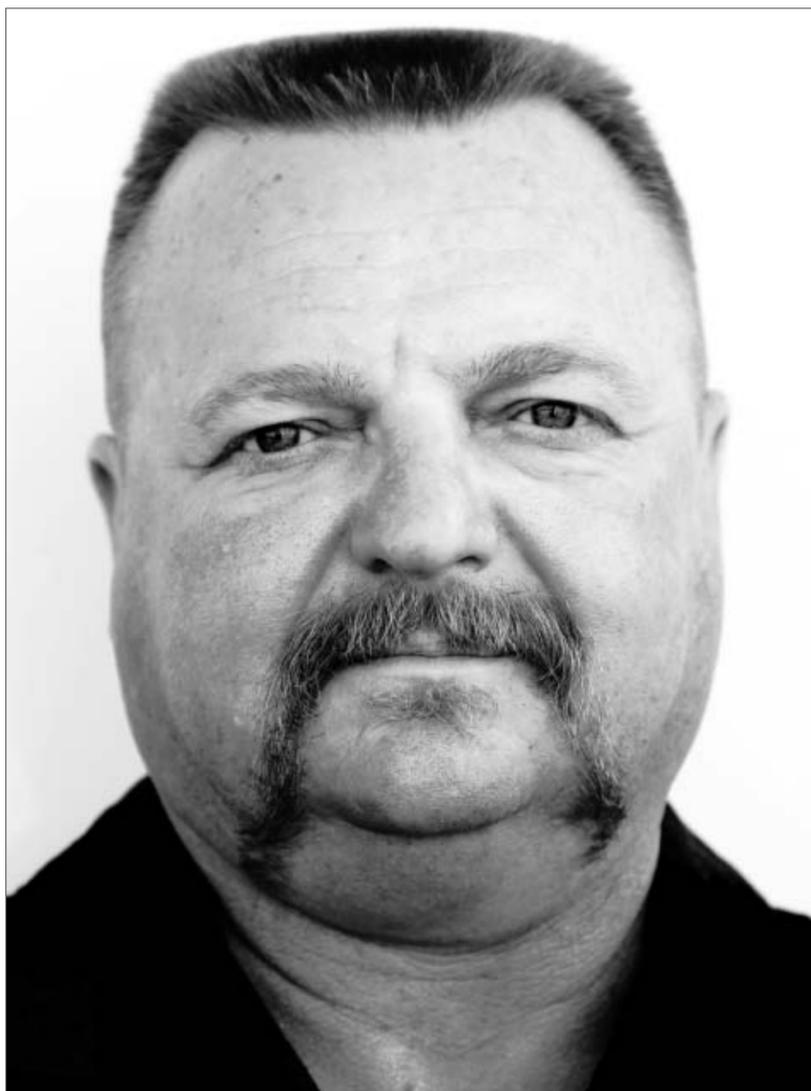
> **I'm not the typical driving** instructor that you'd go to in high school. You know, the guy with the horn-rimmed glasses and the pocket protector saying make a right turn here or make a left turn here.

> **I've had more than my fair** share of speeding tickets when I was younger.

> **I was booted out** of two different towns in the state of Idaho because of my motorcycle. I ain't been back since. Let's just say 48 exhibitionist speeding tickets in a period of two years. Not only did it get me booted out of Idaho, but lack of paying one of those tickets put me in jail for five days.

> **The day I got out of the service,** I had a local cop waiting for me. And he hauled me off to jail. It was probably one of the best things that could have happened to me.

> **I realized jail sucked.** I don't like being penned in. It woke me up. Not that I spent the rest of my life as the golden child, far from it. But it did wake me up to realize, you know you can get in trouble. You're a big boy now. Knock on wood, I have not been in jail since.



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FOX COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 7TH MARINES RETURNS TO THE SNOW

'Frozen Chosin' lives in modern-day Marines



Marines from Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, Marines drag a simulated casualty uphill using an anchoring method, taught by instructors at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center, Bridgeport, Calif., April 8.

Story and photo by Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi

Since recruit training, Marines have been regaled of the story of Fox Company, 2nd Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment at the Chosin Reservoir. Those are the Marines who held off the Chinese under the unimaginable, freezing conditions as the "Frozen Chosin."

Modern day Fox Co. Marines got a taste of what the Marines before them went through above the 38th parallel during a week-long Basic Mobility exercise at the Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center in Bridgeport, Calif., last month.

"It feels good to be able to keep the Fox Company history going," said Lance Cpl. Wesley T. Knight, company radio operator, Fox Co., 2/7.

This was the first time some of the Marines had seen or handled snow. Others were already adept, coming from colder parts of the country. But no matter their origins, the Marines had to face the cold together.

The Marines were aware of Fox Co.'s history and were read passages from "The Last Stand of Fox Company" during the nights prior to the exercise. But they also knew what they were about to go through would not match what occurred at the Chosin Reservoir.

The exercise started with a hike. Fox Co. Marines scaled a mountain approximately 8,500 feet above sea level with a combat load and their snow gear to the Grouse Meadows training area.

They settled into the tree line for shelter, dug in, set up tents and built a trench system for better mobility through the snow around their campsite. The snow was soft at the top, but deeper, it turned to ice.

As the shovels struck the ice, the vibrations reverberated through the Marines' hands and into the bones in their arms.

Fox Hill was never so kind as to offer that soft powdery top. It started with ice and ended when the Marines could dig no longer, aching from the splints in their arms.

Reading about digging into a frozen ground did not compare to the actual experience. Marines of Fox Co. understood that now.

The Marines were grateful for the classes they received beforehand. Many Marines of

terrain tactically and efficiently.

Fox Co. Marines conducted everything from patrols to buddy rushes, learning to use their gear properly.

They also learned how to find victims caught and buried in an avalanche, anchoring methods to repel down steep hills, and how to conduct a medical evacuation.

"The mountainous environment is only one aspect of the overall infantryman, but it is one that is very dangerous," said Staff Sgt. Mathew Salazar, red hat instructor, Unit

it, it'll just start coming back to them," Salazar said.

The Marines also conducted several evacuation exercises with the aid of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a snow storm, loading up Marines as simulated casualties into the helo.

A few days later, they used anchoring techniques they were taught to repel down the hills lining the training center. At first they lowered just themselves, then again with a pack.

Each day held something different, but more of the same cold and snow.

The true challenge of Basic Mobility was not the exercises or training. It was surviving the environment like the Marines of the "Frozen Chosin" had before them.

Fox Co. Marines melted snow for water and slept through freezing nights that dropped below 10 degrees Fahrenheit.

Just as the Marines began to adjust, they packed up and pushed up to a higher elevation at Summit Meadows.

There, they dug in once again, this time with no tents. The "Frozen Chosin" never had tents either, only holes.

Fox Co. Marines dug "snow coffins," holes in the ground fitting two Marines, with one poncho over and one beneath them.

Each Marine pair built theirs differently, fitting their shelters the area's landscape. This was the final place Fox Co. Marines stayed during Basic Mobility, their final acclimation to the environment they may need to fight during a future deployment.

"Any moment in time we could be called to go anywhere," Navia said. "As Marines it's important to be ready."

"Any moment in time we could be called to go anywhere. As Marines it's important to be ready,"

- 1st Lt. Alexander Navia

Fox Hill did not have the benefit of snow training before encountering it. Some did not even go to boot camp.

"This training affords us the opportunity to be prepared," said 1st Lt. Alexander Navia, platoon commander, 2nd platoon, Fox Co., 2/7. "Not only to survive, but to also be combat effective."

The mornings at Grouse Meadows were sunny, unlike the constant snowfall of the "Frozen Chosin."

In the mornings, the Marines trained with snow shoes and skis, learning to traverse the

Training Group, MCMWTC Bridgeport. "If we're not aware of it, it can kill more of us off than the enemy."

After their classroom lessons, Marines had hands-on training.

Each platoon of Fox Co., was sent out to find a simulated avalanche victim buried in the snow. They used avalanche probes, sensors and shovels to successfully find and dig out the "victim," which turned out to be a transmitter in a box.

"It helps give them a little bit of muscle memory, and if they ever have to actually do

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<p>firstsouthern Spiritual Church of Jesus Christ Sun. 9:15 AM Life Groups Sun. 10:30 AM Worship Wed. 6:00 PM Bible Study "First Steps in Jesus" 56374 Onaga Trail in Yucca Valley (760) 365-5771 www.fscyc.org</p>	<p>FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH ELCA Sunday Worship 8:30am Adult Sunday School 9:45am 6336 Hallee Rd Joshua Tree 760-366-8146</p>	<p>St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday School & Eucharist 10:00 am Sunday Gospel Meditation 9:00 am Weds. Morning Prayer 7:30 am "We are baptized into ministry." 72348 Larrea Road (2 blocks N. of KFC) www.stmartinchurch29.org (760) 367-7133</p>	<p>St. James Anglican 6082 Carmelita, Yucca Valley 760-989-0006 www.christprayerpower.com Sunday Worship 6:00 pm Walk of the Cross 04/06 12:00 pm Beginning at the Hi-Desert Star, 56445 29 Palms Hwy. Easter Celebration 04/07 7:00 pm</p>	<p>United Methodist Church of Twentynine Palms 6250 Mesquite Springs Road Phone: 367-7338 Sunday School: 8:00 a.m. - Worship: 9:00 a.m. (Child Care Provided) Reverend Lynn Reece "open hearts, open minds, open doors"</p>
<p>The EPISCOPAL CHURCH WELCOMES YOU St. Joseph of Arimathea 56312 Onaga, Yucca Valley (760) 365-7133 revjanec@aol.com Jane L. Crase, Priest Holy Eucharist Sunday 10:00 a.m. Bible Study Friday 10:00 a.m. Mutual Ministry 3rd Fri of the month 9:00 a.m.</p>	<p>Yucca Valley Center for Spiritual Living Healing Lives & Building Dreams Reverend Ron Scott Sunday Celebration 10 AM 7434 Bannock Trail, Yucca Valley 760-365-2205 yvcsl.org</p>	<p>St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday School & Eucharist 10:00 am Sunday Gospel Meditation 9:00 am Weds. Morning Prayer 7:30 am "We are baptized into ministry." 72348 Larrea Road (2 blocks N. of KFC) www.stmartinchurch29.org (760) 367-7133</p>	<p>Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 AM WE PREACH CHRIST RISEN 59077 Yucca Trail, Yucca Valley CHURCH: 365-2548 Preschool & Daycare: 369-9590</p>	<p>Truth Tabernacle Apostolic Church 73493 29 Palms Hwy., Twentynine Palms Pastor Titus R. Burns Sunday Service 10:00 AM Wednesday Night Bible Study 7:00 PM Call 760-367-4185 for more information *Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38</p>
<p>Jesus House of Prayer (JHOP) Where Jesus is preached Easter Services 04/08 6am & 10:30 am Sunday Service 10:30am & 6pm Ladies Bible Study Wed. 9:30am Across from Hi Desert Theater 6415 Outpost Rd., J.T. 760-369-1166 Pastor Joey Joseph cell#760-534-2779</p>	<p>First Baptist Church of 29 Palms 6414 Split Rock Ave., 760-367-7561 www.fbc29.org SUNDAY SERVICES: Sunday School 9:15 a.m. Worship 10:30 a.m. Youth 5:00 pm EVENING SERVICE: Wednesday 6:00 p.m. Nursery care available all services.</p>	<p>St. Martin-In-The-Fields EPISCOPAL CHURCH Sunday School & Eucharist 10:00 am Sunday Gospel Meditation 9:00 am Weds. Morning Prayer 7:30 am "We are baptized into ministry." 72348 Larrea Road (2 blocks N. of KFC) www.stmartinchurch29.org (760) 367-7133</p>	<p>Good Shepherd Lutheran Church (Missouri Synod) WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 AM SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 AM WE PREACH CHRIST RISEN 59077 Yucca Trail, Yucca Valley CHURCH: 365-2548 Preschool & Daycare: 369-9590</p>	<p>First Christian Church OF YUCCA VALLEY, CA 760-365-4014 www.fcyy.com The Power Of A Quarter-Hour (A Message On Prayer) Psalm 119:147</p>

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NEO, from A1

gets through that we don't want to be evacuated either to the ship or to the safe haven country," said Staff Sgt. Jonathan Griffith, ordnance maintenance chief, CLB-26, and the reception staff noncommissioned officer in charge during the exercise.

The role players all had their parts to play, either as a family, a rowdy or panicking evacuee, or as an ill individual. Others hid contraband items on their person to test the effectiveness of the searches they were put through.

The evacuation started with a briefing to all the evacuees of the process they would undergo and organizing them by U.S. and non-U.S. citizens. The crowd acted panicked, trying to get through the gate as soon as possible, but the Marines took control of the situation.

"There's a lot of confusion that goes along with an evacuation," Griffith said. "There are a whole lot of moving parts that we are just trying to keep going together."

One by one, the evacuees were let through the gate as the Marines manning it kept accountability of who passed through.

"We try to keep the families together because if you separate the mom from the child, it's going to be a

mess," said Lance Cpl. Dylan Motley, landing support specialist, CLB-26.

Some families were assigned a specific Marine to follow them along the process and make sure they were not separated.

It did not take long for the Marines to run into their first obstacle. An evacuee pretending to be sick began to violently cough. The Marines quickly called a hospital corpsman, and after a hasty search, quarantined the individual.

Their next obstacle proved to be more challenging. After their identification cards were scanned and paperwork handled, the evacuees were searched. Simulated semtex explosive materials were found in the bag of an evacuee.

The evacuees and Marines cleared the area as the explosive material, still inside the bag, was removed and the threat neutralized. Operations returned to normal, and the evacuation continued.

All the evacuees had been processed through.

"The first time you do anything, you can't do it to your full ability because you don't know," said Motley. "You have to mess up to learn from it, so we are going to be doing tons of these in our training."

The second round proved to be more challenging. The Marines now

had to coordinate with the Sea Knight helicopter crews for safe transport to the simulated Kenya.

The crowd also proved to be more difficult during the second run-through. Evacuees began to fight each other, more contraband was discovered and more role players became medical casualties.

CLB-26 Marines quickly coordinated with each other to break up fights and separate the individuals.

They confiscated any forbidden items and provided immediate medical treatment to the simulated casualties.

The Marines also helped to make sure anyone with problems processing, such as those with missing passports or foreign nationals unable to speak English, passed through safely after their identities were confirmed.

As the helicopters landed in the center of a stadium at the range, dirt blew up into the faces of evacuees lined up and ready to board. The helicopter took the passengers for a ride to Camp Wilson, where the men and women on board were processed a final time, ending their roles in the exercise.

"We are just going to be getting better and better until we actually have to do one, and it will run smoothly," Motley said.



LANCE CPL. ALI AZIMI

Marines role playing as civilian evacuees challenge the crowd control skills of a Marine during Combat Logistics Battalion 26's non-combatant evacuation operation exercise April 26 at Range 220.

DEPLOYMENT, from A1

families need to utilize the e-Marine website.

The secured site is available only to authorized family members who would have been selected by their Marine or sailor prior to the deployment. This is where King will post the most recent photos, news and events postings. There are also tips and hints for sending care packages and information about the unit's Marine Corps Birthday Ball.

"We've built this site up, and that's where the information is," King said. "It's one-stop shopping for info."

Other options for keeping up with the Wolfpack is the unit's official facebook and website pages and the monthly newsletter sent via e-mail by King. Families are reminded that these options are not secure and they should not share any information that could damage operational security through these sources.

For more information on how to use any of these resources or about upcoming events, contact King at 830-3167.

Wolfpack websites:

<http://www.emarine.org>

<http://www.i-mef.usmc.mil/external/1stmardiv/3dlarbn/>



DIANE DURDEN

Lance Cpl. Peter Napoles, data technician, 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion, cradles his 7-week-old son, Santiago, while he waits for the order to load the bus. "Unfortunately, it comes with the territory," said Napoles about leaving the newborn to deploy to Afghanistan April 26.

MEDAL, from A1

medical care until help arrived. Wheeler, who is now with the Advisor Training Group, was awarded the Bronze Star with a combat "V" at Lance Cpl. Torrey L. Gray Field May 1 for his heroic actions in the midst of combat in Afghanistan.

Marines stood in formation as Wheeler was honored, as his wife and two children watched from the stands. The citation for his award was read over the speakers.

"Some say war and combat are character building; I think they're character revealing," said Maj. Jeffery Kenney, battalion commander, 3rd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. "Wheeler acted on instinct what he thought was right, and he did it."

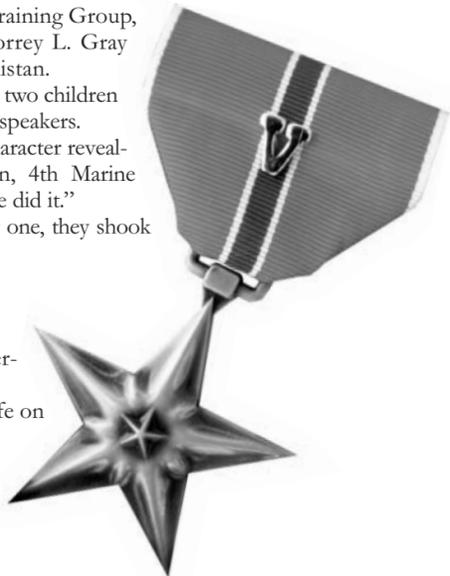
After the pinning, Marines lined up to congratulate the hero. One by one, they shook hands and crowded together for pictures to commemorate the day.

Wheeler stood by his wife as their two kids, a young boy and girl, scurried around them.

"My daughter asked me what this is," Wheeler said, pointing to the medal attached firmly to his blouse. "They're too young to understand, but I'll tell them when they're older."

Oddly enough, the day Wheeler, he himself a father, had put his life on the line to save another man, was Father's Day.

"It's the action at the lower level, the individual action of the Marines that really say the most," Kenney said. "On that day, Wheeler did that. He said the most by his actions."

**AWARD, from A1**

Phelps chow hall earned recognition as "The Best in the West" and brought home the Maj. Gen. W.P.T. Hill Food Service Excellence Award for best in the Marine Corps.

The Combat Center also became the first command to achieve self-sufficiency in its Continuous Process Improvement Program, which focuses on operations cost-savings through efficiency improvements. From conservation to services to savings, the Combat Center set a high standard for performance during the year.

Through their innovation and dedication to their mission, the Combat Center's military and civilian team members continually work to ensure the Combat Center serves as a world class training installation with the highest quality facilities and quality of life programs.

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**TOUGH MINDED
OPTIMISM**
by Lou Gerhardt


Last Saturday our Mormon friends from Yucca Valley's Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints did an absolutely fabulous job of cleaning up the grounds and improving the general appearance of Desert Christ Park in Yucca Valley. Almost 100 Mormons together with a number of other volunteers from the community demonstrated what it really means when neighbors reach out to help neighbors. The entire event was a superior example of how people of different religious persuasions can work together for the common good. God bless our Mormon friends!

It was better than 60 years ago that Pastor Eddie Carver invited artist/sculptor Frank Antone Martin of Los Angeles to bring his 15-foot statue of The Christ to Yucca Valley with the promise that Pastor Carver and his church members would erect it on the side of the hill overlooking the town. Martin accepted the invitation and that decision was the start of something good.

Today better than 55 larger-than-life statues dominate the less than four acres that make up Desert Christ Park. There are groupings of disciples listening to the Sermon on the Mount, apostles and other biblical characters in discussion or contemplation. The bright alabaster sculptures of followers tend to face away from the sun, while the Messiah images all face the bustling Town of Yucca Valley.

One more thing must be noted. Despite the obvious religious themes, Antone Martin maintained that his sculptures were inspired by his devotion to peace on earth and not because of any particular religious doctrine.

Desert Christ Park is operated by the non-profit Desert Christ Park Foundation. Information available at (760) 365-3984.

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WeekINPhotos

Corpsmen in Afghanistan

Photos by
Sgt. Earnest J. Barnes



[Top] Afghan National Army Sgt. Niamutllah, medical sergeant, calms an Afghan child after applying burn ointment and bandages. The child had third degree burns on her face when she arrived at the clinic. Niamutllah, with the help of a hospital corpsman, treated the child's wounds and provided the family with medical supplies to continue treatment.

[Bottom Left] Petty Officer 2nd Class Henry Cates, hospital corpsman, 3rd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment, a Tampa, Fla., native, sorts medical supplies prior to the opening of a medical clinic. The clinic, hosted by the Government of Afghanistan and service members with 3/6, was open to all residents of Marjah.

[Bottom Right] Dr. Habivulah (left) uses his stethoscope to assess a patient as Petty Officer 3rd Class Kyle Higgins (right), hospital corpsman, 3/6, performs a similar procedure on another man. Patients received a basic check up, as well as having all of their health concerns addressed.



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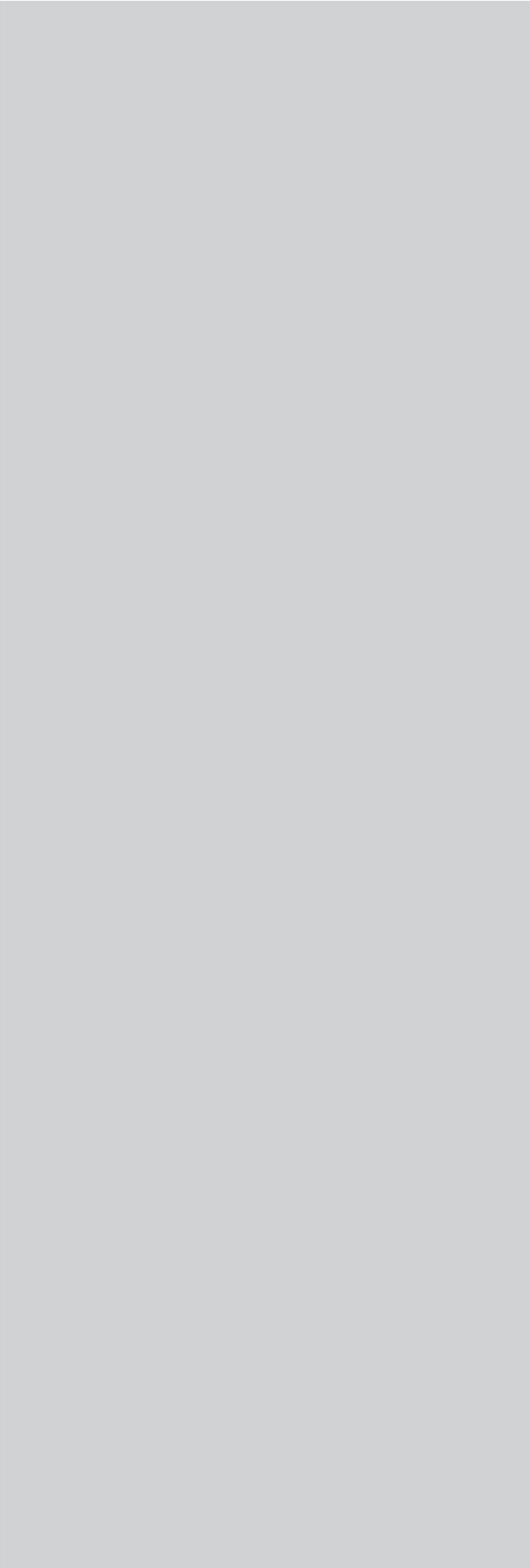
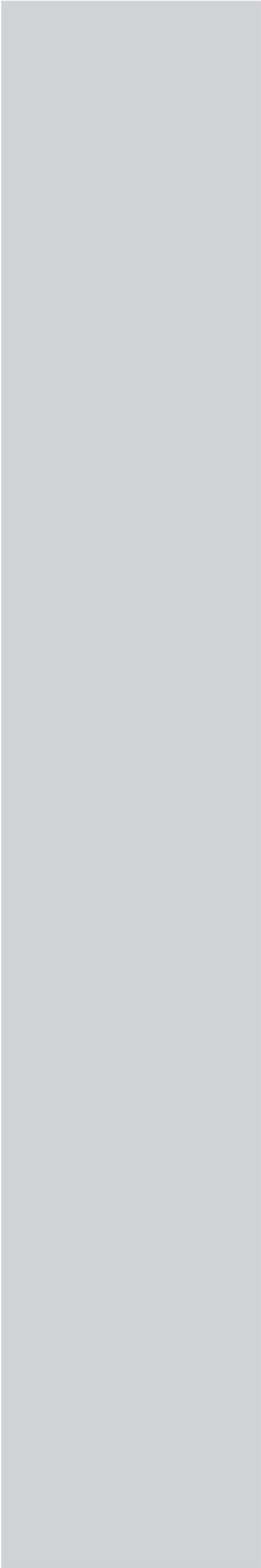
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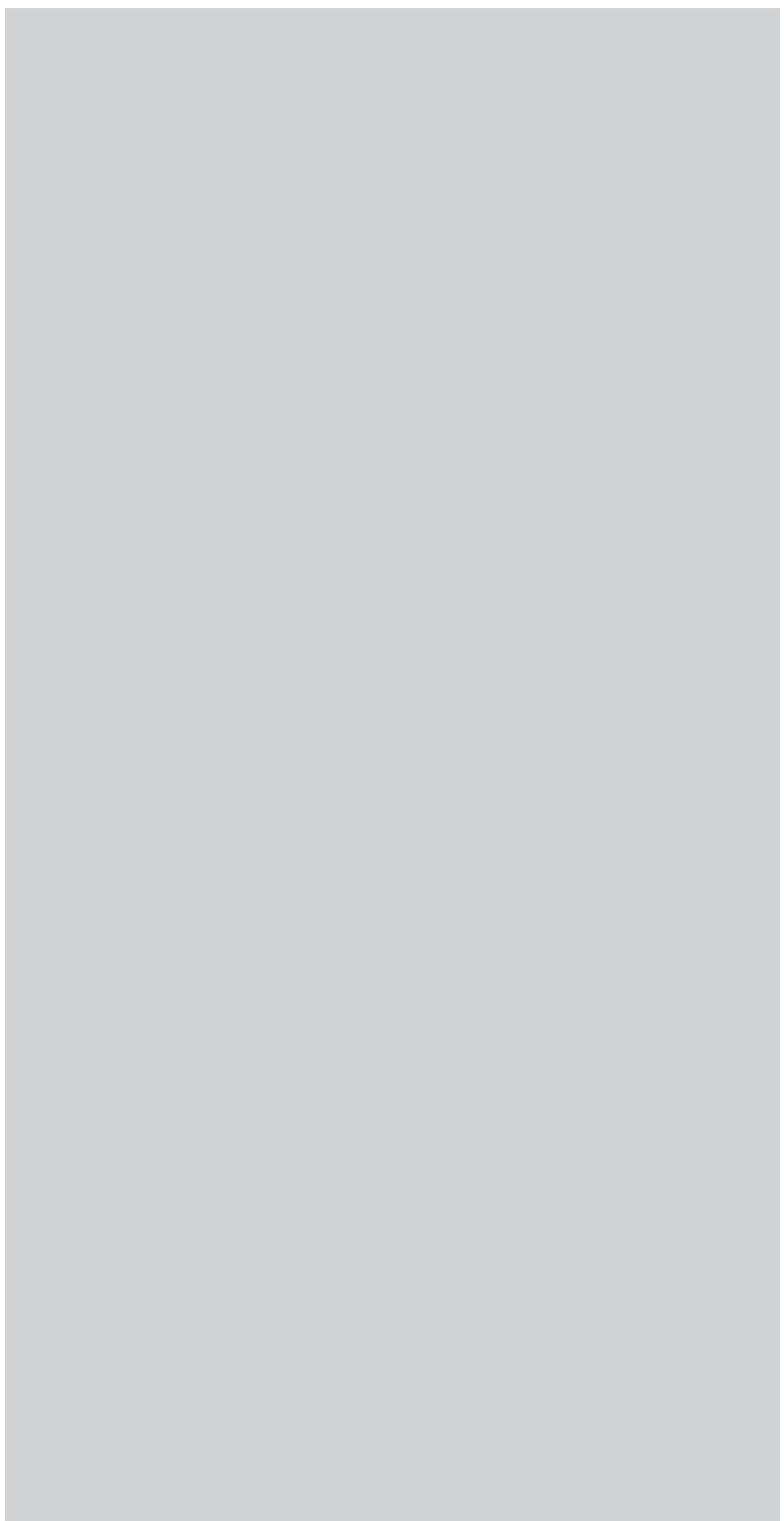


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L.I.N.K.S presents...

CAX for Kids



Combat Center kids play Marine for one day

Story and photos by Lance Cpl. D. J. Wu

Military children often don't know what their parents do for work. A program on base helps military children understand why Mom and Dad are sometimes gone and how to adjust to that lifestyle.

CAX for Kids is hosted by Lifestyles, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, Skills.

"The one thing we always hear from the kids is that their mommy or daddy fights bad guys," said Amber Bilderain, program manager, L.I.N.K.S.

The fun activities taught them what being in the Marine Corps is about. They took part in a colors ceremony, lessons on how to cope with the deployment of a parent, drill and a kid-version of an obstacle course.

"The CAX is a more hands-on event for the kids," said Bilderain, "It kind of gave them a field environment where they have activities."

With the help of some volunteers from Combat Logistics Battalion 7, the kids learned

about the Marines Corps from the Marines who do it day in and day out. The Marines brought out their own equipment for the "sea bag drag" and a "uniform relay race."

CAX for Kids is a fun alternative to L.I.N.K.S.' normal classroom-based lessons said Bilderain.

"We take the L.I.N.K.S. class we would teach

"Without our volunteer mentors, this program wouldn't work," Bilderain said. "We have around 40 volunteers who make up our mentor staff, and they help a lot with the things we do."

CAX for Kids happens once a year during the typical spring break vacation days. It is an event that fills up its roster quickly and is in high demand.

"We usually have our sign-up filled up within a day or two," Bilderain said.

CAX for Kids isn't the only event the L.I.N.K.S. have to help families grow into the Marine Corps' lifestyle.

Along with the standard classes L.I.N.K.S. provides to family members and units, they also have special events like the spouses' CAX and an event for teens as well.

For information on L.I.N.K.S.' CAX for Kids or other programs, visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com/> or call them at 830-1696.

"The CAX is a more hands-on event for the kids. It kind of gave them a field environment where they have activities."

— Amber Bilderain
Program Manager, L.I.N.K.S.

Static displays of various military vehicles and a demonstration by the Provost Marshal's Office were set up at the field for the kids to interact with. The display and demo gave them an idea of the wide variety of jobs that Marines can take on.

for this 6-12 age group, and we take it outside," said Sharon Altemoos, trainer, L.I.N.K.S. "For each one of the lessons, we bring out individual pieces for them to see and do."

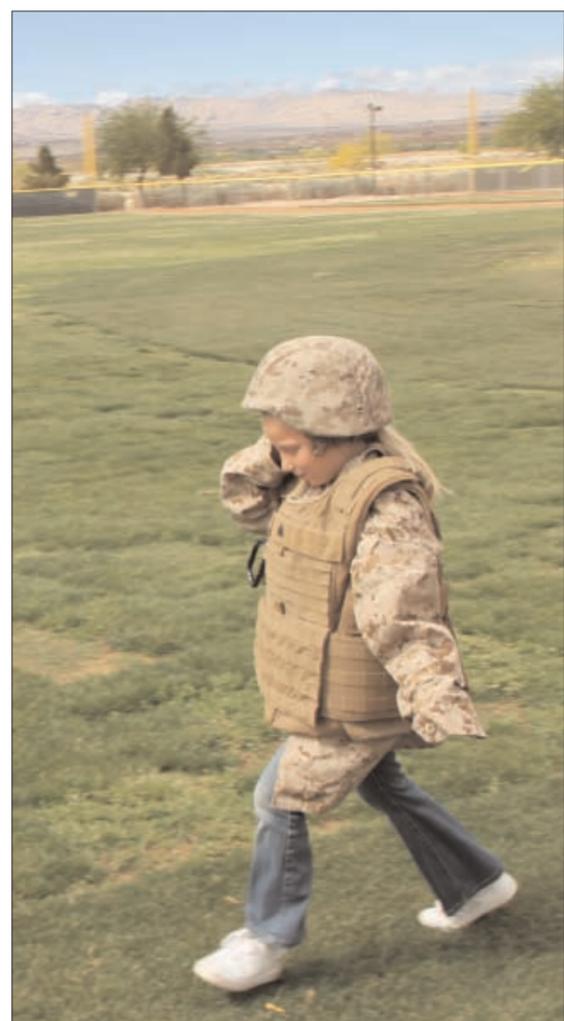
The L.I.N.K.S. program is almost entirely run by its volunteer staff.



[Top] The "orange squad" celebrates as they win the "sea bag drag" race at the CAX for Kids event hosted by Lifestyles, Insights, Networking, Knowledge, Skills at Felix Field April 26. The race was one of many activities that the kids took part in during their eventful day. CAX for Kids events help military children learn about what their parents do for work and how to adjust to the Marine Corps' lifestyle.

[Right] A young girl runs across the field wearing a Marine Corps blouse, flak jacket and Kevlar helmet in the uniform relay race activity at CAX for Kids. The race was for the kids to experience how Marines have to wear their protective equipment every day while they're deployed.

[Above] Sgt. Joshua Harvey, volunteer from Combat Logistics Battalion 7, helps the children at CAX for Kids get one arms distance away from each other to be part of a proper formation. Sgt. Harvey was one of four volunteers from CLB-7 that led the kids as their squad leaders.





Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

Friday: Social Hour with food, 5 - 7 p.m. followed by DJ Gjettblaque, 8 - 11 p.m., Ladies Night
Saturday: Variety Night, DJ Gjettblaque 8 - 11 p.m.
Thursday: Social Hour, 7:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Friday: Social Hour with food, 5 - 7 p.m.
Wednesday: Free gourmet bar food, 5 to 7 p.m.
Thursday: Social Hour, 7 - 9 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Friday: Social Hour, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday: All-hands lunch from 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Monday: Steak night and full menu, 4:30 - 8 p.m.
Tuesday: Social Hour, 5 - 7 p.m.
Thursday: Social Hour, 5 - 7 p.m.

Combat Center Officers' Club

Monday: Steak night, 5 - 7:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday: All-hands lunch, from 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.
Thursday: Taco Night, 5 - 7 p.m.

For complete calendars visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Local Events

A Little Murder Never Hurt Anybody

When: Every Friday & Saturday from May 4 to June 2
Where: Theatre 29
736377 Sullivan Rd., Twentynine Palms, Calif.
For tickets and information call 316-4151
or visit <http://www.theatre29.org>

The Dustbowl Revival

Ever evolving group of more than 10 local folk bands
When: 8 p.m., Friday, May 4
Where: Pappy and Harriet's
53688 Pioneer Town Road, Pioneer Town, Calif.
For more information visit
<http://www.pappyandharriets.com>

Free Line Dance Lessons

Learn to dance to traditional country music
When: 5 - 9 p.m., every Sunday
Where: Willie Boy's Saloon and Dance Hall
50048 29 Palms Hwy, Morongo Valley, Calif.
For more information, call 363-3343.

Lower Desert

Tony Bennett

Legendary entertainer sings live
When: 9 p.m., Friday, May 11
Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon, Calif.
For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit
<http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Dwight Yoakam

Country music star live
When: 8 p.m., Friday, May 25
Where: Spotlight 29 Casino Resort
46-200 Harrison Place, Coachella, Calif.
For more information call 866-377-6829 or visit
<http://www.spotlight29.com>.

Sugarland

Country group live in concert
When: 9 p.m., Saturday, May 25
Where: Agua Caliente
32-250 Bob Hope Dr., Rancho Mirage
For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit
<http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Joan Sebastian

Grammy Award-winning Mexican singer, songwriter
When: 8 p.m., Saturday, June 16
Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit
<http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, May 4
6 p.m. - The Vow, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. - John Carter, Rated PG-13
Midnight - 21 Jump Street, Rated R
Saturday, May 5
10:30 a.m. - Free Matinee Rango, Rated G
12:30 p.m. - Dr. Seuss' The Lorax, Rated PG
3 p.m. - Dr. Seuss' The Lorax 3D, Rated PG
6 p.m. - A Thousand Words, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. - Wrath of the Titans, Rated PG-13
Midnight - Silent House, Rated R
Sunday, May 6
12:30 p.m. - Mirror Mirror, Rated PG
3 p.m. - Mirror Mirror, Rated PG
6 p.m. - Wrath of the Titans 3D, Rated PG-13
9 p.m. - Wrath of the Titans, Rated PG-13
Monday, May 7
7 p.m. - Silent House, Rated R
Tuesday, May 8
7 p.m. - John Carter 3D, Rated PG-13
Wednesday, May 9
5:30 p.m. - Mirror Mirror, Rated PG
8:30 p.m. - 21 Jump Street, Rated R
Thursday, May 10
5:30 p.m. - Dr. Seuss' The Lorax, Rated PG
8:30 p.m. - The Vow, Rated PG-13

Slapstick comedy trio gets modern makeover



COURTESY PHOTO

This movie, a jubilantly juvenile celebration of their slapstick legacy of the 1930s and '40s, casts fresh actors in the traditional roles of Moe, Larry and Curly, the "classic" Stooges lineup, but transplants them into the setting of a colorful modern world.

NEIL POND

"The Three Stooges"

Starring Chris Diamantopoulos, Sean Hayes & Will Sasso
Directed by Bobby Farrelly & Peter Farrelly
PG, 92min.

With roots as a vaudeville act in the 1920s, the holy trinity of knuckleheaded nyuk-nyuk-nyuks became comedy icons decades later as television began syndicating their short films, nursing a new generation of young viewers on their manic mix of eye-poking, hair-pulling, face-slapping, noggin-busting shtick.

This movie, a jubilantly juvenile celebration of their slapstick legacy of the 1930s and '40s, casts fresh actors in the traditional roles of Moe, Larry and Curly, the "classic" Stooges lineup, but transplants them into the setting of a colorful modern world. As such, it's a hybrid of the act's vintage "Stooge-isms" grafted onto jokes about iPhones,

Twitter and reality TV.

As the new Stooges, Chris Diamantopoulos, Sean Hayes and Will Sasso do an outstanding and amazing job of "becoming" Moe, Larry and Curly, nailing their facial expressions, physical tics and vocal inflections, and mastering the much more-complex-than-it-looks balance required for each leg of the act's comedy tripod.

The movie's directors, brothers Bobby and Peter Farrelly, made their bones in Hollywood with the gross-out gags and bottom-feeding humor of "Something About Mary" and "Dumb And Dumber." They're obviously big Stooges fans, and their high regard is evident in the movie's structure as three "short" connected mini-stories, each with its own opening title card and signature Stooges theme music.

The Farrellys, true to form, throw in a few new lowbrow bits, including a "shootout" using peeing babies, a scene that features

the result of Curly's flatulence meeting an open flame, and Larry's encounter with a lobster that Moe shoves down his pants, that are actually, in context, more comical than crude, even if they lower the bar of taste a bit beneath what the Stooges would have done 75 years ago.

Recognizable faces include "Modern Family" actress Sofia Vergara, Larry David (as a nun!), Jennifer Hudson, Jane Lynch from "Glee," supermodel Kate Upton, Brian Doyle-Murray, basketball star Dwight Howard, and the entire cast of "Jersey Shore."

The Stooges have always been an acquired taste, and your interest in this movie will likely align with just where on the spectrum between comedic geniuses and infantile buffoons you tend to place them. But in the Farrelly's Stooge-iverse, there's no doubt that Moe, Larry and Curly are kings.

The brothers can't resist throwing in a couple of bonus gags when the movie's

over. At the very end, the Farrellys stroll onscreen to caution younger viewers not to try any of the injurious stunts they've just seen, like when Moe bonks Larry on the head with a hammer (it's a rubber prop, it's pointed out). But the Farrellys aren't really the Farrellys; they're a couple of actors portraying the Farrellys. Even the "serious" public-service announcement, it turns out, is a joke.

And stay as the credits roll to catch the totally out-of-left-field music video of the new-age Stooges hamming it up to their version of Stevie Wonder's "It's a Shame." Why that song, and what's the connection?

I can't think of one...other than, perhaps, it'd be a shame if any fan of the real Stooges missed this "reel" Stooges tribute, a pet project from a couple of filmmakers who are obviously passionate fans, and three actors who do an almost uncanny job of channeling Moe, Larry and Curly's classic comic vibes.

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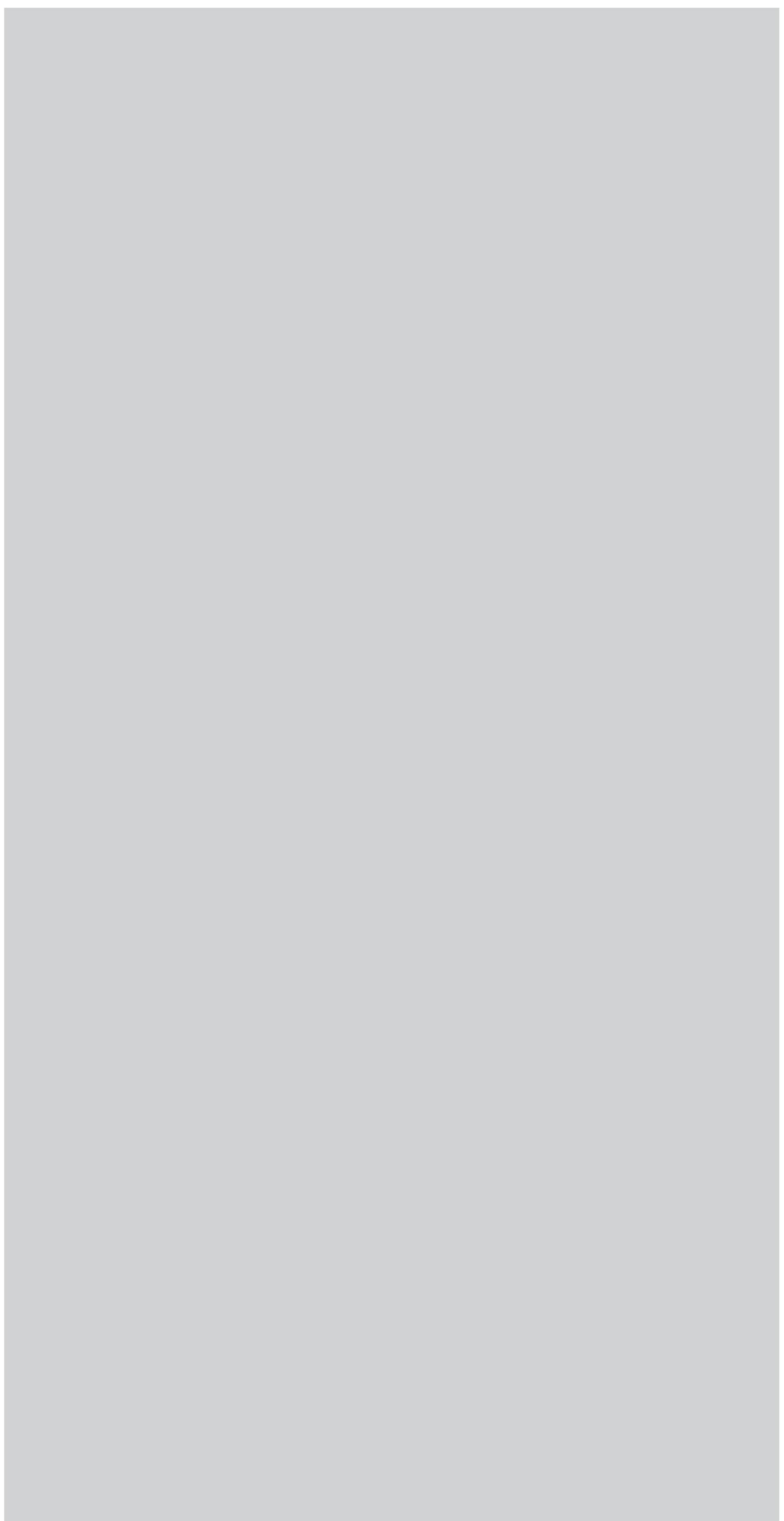
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Athletes & Tanks

Photos by Lance Cpl. Ali Azimi

Pro- athletes visit 1st Tanks

[Right] Marines and professional football and basketball players group together for a photo during the athletes' visit with 1st Tank Battalion April 27. The athletes had the opportunity to get inside the tanks and meet the Marines.

[Bottom Right] Nathaniel "Greatness" Stone, running back, Inland Empire Enforcers, is instructed how to enter an M1A1 Abrams Tank.

[Bottom Left] Marines hand over a tank round case base signed by 1st Tanks Marines to the athletes. The players in turn auto-graphed footballs and basketballs for the Marines.



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